

Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife

Minutes

Thursday ~ September 17, 2015 ~ 6:00 p.m.
Nevada Department of Wildlife
Conference Room B
1100 Valley Road, Reno, Nevada

MEMBERS

Sean Shea, Chair
Miles Humphreys, Jr., Vice-chair
Michelle Spencer, Secretary
Cathy Smith
William Tamblyn

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (Non-action item)

Member Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL (Non-action item)

Chair Shea called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was established.

PRESENT: Miles Humphreys, Jr., Sean Shea, Cathy Smith, Michelle Spencer and William Tamblyn.

ABSENT: None.

Jen Gustafson – Deputy District Attorney, was also present.

Chair Shea reordered the agenda.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Non-action item)

There were no public comments.

8. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION ON URBAN WILDLIFE CONFLICTS (Non-action item) - *An informational on urban wildlife conflicts.*

David Catalano – NDOW (Nevada Department of Wildlife), Regional Supervising Biologist, narrated a PowerPoint ® presentation (copy on file). Mr. Catalano noted that wildlife tends to thrive in urban environments that have encroached on previously undeveloped land and attract a variety of animals including rodents and their predators such as snakes. Typically calls about wildlife incursions in the urban wildland interface come from individuals having little experience in dealing with native wildlife. Mr. Catalano outlined the various type of wildlife that are found in the three sub-regions of Nevada such as desert tortoise in southern Nevada, owls and raptors in the eastern portion of the state and snakes, coyotes and raccoons in the western region. Mr. Catalano summarized the 808 calls received during 360 hours of staff time with two responses involving 500 miles and 60 hours of staff time. Mr. Catalano noted that NDOW is currently seeking additional staff to work in the western and southern regional offices to field calls and help educate the public on urban wildlife issues. Information on the job listing may be found at:

<https://neats.state.nv.us/NEATS/Recruiting/ViewAnnouncement.aep?recruitmentId=25657>.

Overtime the educational component will evolve based on public comment. Mr. Catalano then noted that NDOW currently has a media group that he will meet with them to discuss other ways in which information can be disseminated such as news programs and newspapers articles as well as the internet. Mr. Catalano noted that he has and will continue to provide information to homeowners.

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Additionally, a brochure will be developed that addresses the benefits of wildlife, such as raptors, snakes and the like.

Member Spencer noted that presentations should also be made to schools to involve children who tend to enjoy hearing about wildlife.

Chair Shea noted that such a program already exists.

Member Spencer asked that information be provided so that she can communicate it to the schools she works with.

Member Humphreys, Jr., noted that a segment of the population does not use the internet and suggested that newspaper articles would be a good thing, perhaps in the local section of the newspaper.

Member Spencer concurred and suggested the use of news channels as well.

7. OVERVIEW OF THE RTC (Regional Transportation Commission) SOUTHEAST CONNECTOR PROJECT (Non-action item) – *An informational overview of the RTC's (Regional Transportation Commission) Southeast Connector project, including the wetlands mitigation and oversight as required by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.*

Garth Oksol – RTC, Project Manager, narrated a PowerPoint® presentation (copy on file) and outlined the highlights and progress to date. Mr. Oksol noted that this project provides an additional north-south connection in the underserved eastern Truckee Meadows. The roadway is being built in a manner that raises it above the 1997 flood level and improves wetlands and habitat. Mr. Oksol identified each of the wetlands features and requirements of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) 404 permit. One facet of the project includes features that naturally remove certain contaminants currently present. Additionally, The Corps has authorized the use of solar powered bubblers in certain areas to reduce mosquitoes in keeping with the Washoe County mosquito abatement program. Mr. Oksol explained that the 15 trees removed during the construction will be repurposed to provide wildlife habitat enhancements. Other features include ways to reduce raptor perches along the roadway as well as fencing designed to help reduce small mammal roadkill and large animal access to the roadway as a safety enhancement. Mr. Oksol showed a short video that may be viewed at: Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_fBgbhQUMc.

Mr. Oksol may be contacted at 775-332-2137 or email goksol@rtcwashoe.com.

Full information on the SouthEast Connector may be found on the RTC website: www.southeastconnector.com.

During the discussion Mr. Oksol explained that RTC owns the property and will deed restrict it from any future development. Additionally, as the project was being planned steps were taken to preserve views and access in and around Rosewood Lakes Golf Course. The contract requires a three year guarantee on all landscaping and vegetation. Should any vegetation need to be replaced the three year guarantee is restarted. Additionally, RTC will allocate an annual line item in the budget process

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for maintenance of the wetlands. It was explained that a federal court case is pending and will be heard on October 19, 2015, as to whether the US Army Corps of Engineers should have conducted an EIS (Environmental Impact Study). It was noted that the Ninth Circuit Court had ruled in favor of the Corps and RTC position previously. Other discussion noted that the multi-use pathways would be maintained and that the wetlands are designed to be self-sustaining. It was explained that the construction did not alter any natural water flows. It was suggested that the State's veterinarian's office in Sparks be contacted about the Barn Owl that had been brought to NDOW to determine cause of death.

Responding to Darryl Harwell's concern about the possibility of turning the roadway over to NDOT, Mr. Oksol clarified that the design was developed by CH2MHill professionals and that the project minimizes wetlands impacts in the Rosewood Lakes Golf Course by going from fairway to fairway and that input had been provided on the design by NDOW as it regards Raptors, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as well as the Corps.

Mr. Oksol explained that the multiuse path was designed so that motorized devices used by local governments to remove trash can be driven.

Chair Shea suggested that the exit gate on the fencing be reviewed as deer have been known to try and jump the exit gate only to be trapped hanging upside down.

Responding to Member Smith's inquiry about mercury encasement, Mr. Oksol explained that monitoring has been continuous during the construction process and that the 404 and 401 permits include mercury sampling. RTC has taken measure to dewater certain areas to keep the creek from flowing onto or through the construction area.

Member Humphreys, Jr., commended the RTC for the presentation and questioned who ultimately has responsibility for maintenance.

Mr. Oksol stated that the RTC will retain ownership and that there has been some discussion with the Cities of Reno, Sparks and Washoe County as to maintenance in the future. Mr. Oksol noted that any loss of wetlands habitat will be acted on by the Corp who authorized the use of solar powered bubblers to reduce mosquito in accordance with the Washoe County Vector Control. Mr. Oksol emphasized that trees had been set back from the roadway to avoid Hawks and other wildlife from being struck by vehicles. The removal of one of the repurposed trees may be moved to another area along the roadway.

The meeting recessed at 7:15 p.m. and reconvened at 7:23 p.m.

4. APPROVAL OF JULY 30, 2015, MINUTES (For possible action)

Hearing no public comment, Chair Shea asked for Board discussion or a motion.

Member Humphreys, Jr., asked that the last page be corrected to read "nuisance animals are of two legged rather than the four legged variety."

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It was moved by Member Tamblyn, seconded by Chair Shea, to approve the July 309, 2015, minutes as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

5. BOARD MEMBER MEETING ASSIGNMENT (Non-action item) – *A discussion and selection of member(s) to attend the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners meetings on:*

5-1) September 25 and 26, 2015, in Las Vegas, Nevada – Miles Humphreys Jr.

5-2). November 13 and 14, 2015, in Reno, Nevada – Members Spencer, Tamblyn and Chair Shea.

Chair Shea commented that he might not be at the November 5, 2015, meeting.

6. COMMITTEE, MEMBER AND LIAISON UPDATES (Non-action items)

6-1). Correspondence (including sportsmen's concerns) and Announcements – Member Spencer read correspondence (copy on file) concerning an audit of Wildlife Services.

Chair Shea noted that the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife had reviewed and made recommendations at the July 30, 2015, meeting on all but one of the items on the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners upcoming meeting.

Chair Shea commended staff on the Small Game Status Book and noted that Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners is seeking nominations for the Wayne E. Kirsch Award.

6-2). Overview of the August 7 and 8, 2015, meeting of the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners – Member Tamblyn provided an overview of the August 7 and 8, 2015, meetings noting that the Chair and Vice-chair had been reelected. Additionally, Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approved Commission Regulation 456 with little discussion. Member Tamblyn noted that several presentations were well done. Member Tamblyn noted that he had conveyed the Washoe County Advisory Board to Manage Wildlife's position on issues that concerns and recommendations for modification or denial.

9. COMMISSION REGULATION 16-02 FISHING SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS for 2016-2018 [For Possible Action] – *A review, discussion and possible action to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve, deny or otherwise modify recommended fishing seasons, bag and possession limits for the period of March 1, 2016 through February 28, 2018.*

Travis Hawks - NDOW (Nevada Department of Wildlife), noted that a grant had been approved to move forward with the Chimney Reservoir Project. Mr. Hawks noted that the use of Tiger Muskie had worked in other western states to reduce Carp. Mr. Hawks then summarized the recommendations for Eagle Valley and Kirch WMA to reduce pressure on black bass during spawning season. Mr. Hawks also noted that Mount Granite had been closed since 2001 and that staff had been asked about reopening the area as the fishery in Walker Lake has crashed. NDOW has agreed to resume stocking Tiger Trough with a limit of 3 game fish. Mr. Hawks noted changes that will reduce redundancies in regulations along the Truckee River.

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Chair Shea opened public comments.

Rex Flowers drew attention to the different limits for Storey and Washoe County where the Truckee River serves as the boundary. Mr. Flowers suggested that the limits for Washoe County and Storey County be modified so they are consistent thus avoiding any confusion on bag limits.

Chair Shea closed public comment.

It was moved by Chair Shea, seconded by Member Spencer, to recommend that the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners approve Commission Regulation 16-02 Fishing Seasons and Bag Limits with the following modification: change the bag limits for the Truckee River to be consistent from the California State Line to Pyramid Lake with Storey County regulations mirroring those of Washoe County. The motion carried unanimously.

10. **WASHOE COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD TO MANAGE WILDLIFE MEMBERS AND/OR STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS, REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION AND SELECTION OF TOPICS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS** [Non-action item] – *Selection of additional agenda item(s) for the next meeting is November 5, 2015.*

No new items were identified.

11. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** [Non-action item]

There were no public comments.

12. **ADJOURNMENT** [Non-action item]

Chair Shea adjourned the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

AS APPROVED BY THE WASHOE COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD TO MANAGE WILDLIFE IN SESSION ON NOVEMBER 5, 2015.